

SECTION III—REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed December 9, 2005. Claim 1 is amended, claim 7 is canceled, and new claims 13-22 are added. Claims 1-6, 8-12 and 13-22 remain pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and allowance of all pending claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claims 7 and 10 but indicated that these claims would be allowable if re-written in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 7. Applicants submit that claim 1 is therefore in condition for allowance and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claim. As to claims 2-6 and 8-12, these claims depend on an allowable independent claim and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claim.

New claim 13 includes the limitations formerly found in claim 10, base claim 1 and intervening claim 9. Applicants submit that claim 13 is therefore in condition for allowance and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claim. As to claims 14-22, these claims depend on an allowable independent claim and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claim.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by U.S. Patent No. 6,453,435 to Limon, Jr. *et al.* ("*Limon*"). Applicants

respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejections are moot in view of the above amendments.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as obvious in view of, and therefore unpatentable over, *Limon* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,344,736 to Kerrigan *et al.* ("*Kerrigan*"). Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejections are moot in view of the above amendments.

Conclusion

Given the above amendments and accompanying remarks, all claims pending in the application are in condition for allowance. If the undersigned attorney has overlooked a teaching in any of the cited references that is relevant to allowance of the claims, the Examiner is requested to specifically point out where such teaching may be found. Further, if there are any informalities or questions that can be addressed via telephone, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at (206) 292-8600.


Charge Deposit Account

Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fee(s) that may be due in this matter, and please credit the same deposit account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 3-8-06


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Enclosures: Amendment transmittal, in duplicate
Information Disclosure Statement
PTO1449 or PTO/SB/08A
Copies of IDS references